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CEN.-CIVIL
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SUGAWARA DENJU TENARAI KAGAMI

--- Scene of Terakoya ---

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Each word, well learnt, deserves a thousand, or even
Two thousand gold coins; indeed in the three thousand
Worlds of the Cosmos, it's the treasure unsurpassed.

Mixed'mong numbers of children so taught and learning,
Under the tutership of a writing Master,
Is little Lord Kanshusai, who is served with care
By Genzo and his wife, disguised as their own boy,
In their private school of penmanship in Seriu,---
A remote villate'way from Kyoto, which is kept
For the village urchins, ingenious and otherwise.

Some would copy letters/ on their hands and faces,
Instead of on their copy-sheets; others, for shame!
Daubing their copy-books with wild figures, which
caused,

No end of trouble and worry to their Master.

'Mong such is peasant Gosaku's elderly boy,
Who, taking advantage of the Master's absence,
Now stands up and calls to all the pupils, saying:

Gosaku's Son: "Now boys, I'll tell you what. While the cat
is away the mice ought to play. Look here, I've
just scribbled w/ such a fine figure. And why not
you?"

'Gainst this proposal of that 15 year old slobberer
Is raised a prompt but mild voice from the little
Lord:

Kanshusai: "If we learn one new word each day, we can
master 360 odd words in a year's time, is the
teachings/ of our Master. You had better learn
your penmanship instead of indulging in idle
scribbling."

Thus counselled by an eight year old fellow pupil
The defeated falls in 'pon the expostulator:

Gosaku's Son: Goodness gracious. What do I hear? Here's
precociousness for you."

Upon this the rest of the pupils try to rise
Against the elder boy for taunting his senior
That the little Lord is, in point of penmanship
For his calligraphic virtue inherited
From his father, known us 'God of Calligrpahy."

At this critical moment turns up the matron
From the inner rooms, to see what's amiss with them.

Tonami: "Fie, my boys. Again at your old squabbling?
I'm really weary of these noises. To think that
my husband should happen to be away from home to-
day of all days. And there's no knowing when
he is coming back as he's been invited out to

luncheon. Well, as I remember it, we are expecting a new pupil today so you shall all have a half holiday after lunch, provided of course you stop this noise and study your lessons hard."

The matron's witty remarks soon restores order 'Mong the exullant boys, now seen reading aloud Quicker than copying, their phrase-book of letter writing:

"A-B-C-D- --- Thanking you for your message of the other day, ---

I beg to send you these few lines --- Yours sincerely,"
When up comes their I'm-your-bumble-"servant" with loads
Of cooked-food boxes and a desk on his shoulders,
Bearing company to a dignified lady
With a boy 'boul seven years old, and knocks at the door.

The matron inside, who's been expecting the call,
Receives her in a kindly tone o'er the entrance,
Where feminine grace and courtesy charmingly kiss,
As she wormly invites the lady to step in
And the fair visitor with a fairer smile greets:

Chiyo: "I'm a humble resident on the outskirts of this village and wishing to have this tot placed under the tutorage of your Master, I sent a

messenger some time ago with the request. And as you were kind enough to comply with it, I've brought the child with me. I understand that you also have a son of your own. I would be so pleased if I could just see him."

Tonami: "Indeed you are welcome. And here is Master Genzo's heir."

Chiyo: "Oh, really? What a lovely child. I see many other little pupils around. And that means, of course, no end of cares on your part I should think."

Tonami: "Yes, as you can well imagine. By the way, is this the boy who is going to join us? And what is his name, may I ask?"

Chiyo: "He's named Kotaro, and a very naughty boy too, I'm afraid."

Tonami: "I'm sure he's not. What a nice, noble-looking child. As ill luck would have it, my husband happens to be out at the moment."

Chiyo: "Oh, is the Master absent?"

Tonami: "If you are in a hurry I can easily send for him."

Chiyo: "No, please don't bother. Besides I have another call to make and I'm sure that he will be back by the time I return. Sansuke, (turning to the accompanying servant) bring that load in, will you

please, and offer it to this lady?"

"Yes, Madam", so saying the man presents the set
Of cooked-food boxes, and a packet on the tray

Tonami: "Dear me. What polite formalities you observe."

Chiyo: "Oh, no, no. 'Tis nothing but a small token of this
boy's introduction. It's such a trifling that I'm
almost ashamed to present it. I should be much
obliged if you would kindly distribute among the
little pupils the contents of these boxes" ---

Which must be, it's plain, if not so mentioned by her,
Steamed sweets, vegetable hotchpotch, and broiled bean-
curd,

Bespeaking what a pet he is to his parents.

Tonami: "You are much too kind. But you are making the
matter all too formal. The Master shall see all
this courtesy on your part as soon as he returns."

Chiyo: "Oh, please don't mention it. It's only a small
expression of our thanks. Now my darling, (turning
to Kotaro) I'm going as far as the next village
and I want you to be a good boy while I'm away.
I'll be back soon so don't be naughty. Well Madam,
you'll please excuse me -----"

So saying she steps right out of the entrance, when

Kotaro runs up to her and clinging 'round her,
Persists hard that he wants to accompany her.

"What a sight, when you're old enough to know better."

She pushes him 'side, and turning to the matron:

Chiyo: "Why, just look at this. It's still a day-old baby."

Tonami: "Oh, I think that it is only natural, Well, little
boy, I've got something nice for you here."

She winks at the mother to be quick to come back.

Chiyo: "Oh yes, its only a moment's visit.

Looking behind over and over 'gain, feeling
Difficult to tear herself away from her boy,
Mother goes on her way at last with the servant.
To cheer up the little new-comer, the matron
Invites him up to the side of the little Lord,
When Genzo comes back, unusually pale and cross,
And looking about grimly at the boys, murmurs:

On this day, Genzo was summoned to the office of the
village-head, and now comes home, under strict orders from
Shihei's retainer, Gamba, to decapitate the little Lord and to
produce his head.

//////////

Genzo comes out of the proscenium curtain, here, and trudges along towards his home on the stage.

Kichemon
Genzo: "Birth is much, but breeding's more, so goes the proverb, but unlike in the urban districts, everyone of them here is much too rustic and none of them could be of any use to me, in spite of all my efforts."

His suggestive words make her somewhat uneasy:

Tonami: "I see by your countenance that you are not your usual self. I wonder if it is the result of the liquor you had at luncheon. At any rate you shouldn't make those remarks against these pupils of ours because you knew from the start that they were country-bred. And what is more, this is the day when the new pupil made his ~~1st~~ initial appearance and I would be sorry indeed to have him think that you were such an unkind Master. Won't you meet the new pupil in a better frame of mind?"

She thus brings Kotaro before her husband, but He keeps ~~h~~ his head hung as if in meditation.

The little one then bows as best he can, greeting:

Kotaro: "Sir, I'm Kotaro, your obedient new pupil."

These simple words make Genzo unwittingly turn,
And following a long and silent stare at him,
The Master suddenly recovers his humour:

Genzo: "Why here's a handsome lad. So noble-looking as
if of high birth and worthy, I'll warrant, of
any proud lord's son. What a nice boy, indeed
you are."

Encouraged by his recovery of his temper,
His lady chimes in with pride and satisfaction:

Tonami: "Oh yes. He's certainly a good boy."

Genzo: "True. None could be better. And where's his
mother?"

Tonami: "She has just gone to the next village on busi-
ness while you were out."

Genzo: "Has she? That's so much ~~teh~~ better. Then,
you'll do well to lead him into the inner rooms
with the rest of the boys, and keep him well at
play."

All boys cleared, she cautiously speaks to her husband:

Tonami: "What on earth was the matter with you, my dear,

that you should come home from luncheon with such a gloomy countenance, and that you should recover your humour with such abruptness at the very sight of that new pupil. I really can't make it out. What was the matter?

Genzo: "Matter enough. You know I was called to the office of the Village Headman this morning. Well, when I got there I found that they had trapped me with a false invitation. As soon as I made my appearance, I was cross-questioned by Shundo Gamba, retainer of our Lord's enemy, Shihei, whose irresistible demand was either to present him the head of our little Lord, whom he says he was informed by his secret agent, I am sheltering here as my own son, or to lead him here so that he could behead the little Lord himself. Around the office were, as I found out, disposed hundreds of Shihei's men. Gamba was assisted by that ingrate, Matsuo-maru, who was brought up under our Lord's care, but now gone over to Shihei's side, entrusted as he prated, though enfeebled with illness, with a mission of identifying the head of Lord Kanshusai.

"Under these dilemmatical circumstances, I was compelled to give my word that the little Lord's

head would be presented to them. My idea at the time was to give them a fake head and as I trudged homeward I revolved in my mind which one of our pupils would be most suitable, but to my utter disappointment I found that there is nothing so detached as between the noble-bred and the hovel-bred, and I came home with a heavy heart, thinking that the fate of our little Lord was doomed. But Heaven is always on the side of the just. One look at the new pupil, and I knew that I found the safest substitute. His features bear such a resemblance to those of the little Lord, that I felt sure I could easily pass his head for the genuine, without any risky attempt to talk black into white. As soon as we overcome this crisis, my plan is to remove the little Lord to a safer place. Until that time we must stand on the sharpest guard to successfully carry out our plan."

Tonami: "Wait a moment. We must be very careful in dealing with Matsuomaru, who is so crooked in nature, and what's worse still, who knows our lord by sight. He could identify our little Lord without the least difficulty."

Genzo: "He could, to be sure. But that's where we shall

have to take a chance. Don't forget that the living and the lifeless countenances differ, and that the striking resemblance of Kotaro's face to that of the little Lord may not betray our trick so readily. But in the event of our failure, I can but stay Matsuomaru on the spot. As for the rest of Shihei's men, I would fight it out with them to the bitter end, and then take the little Lord with me into the other world. So far so good, but the immediate difficulty that presents itself is, what are we to do when Kotaro's mother returns to claim her boy?

Tonami: "You needn't worry yourself over that point. I may be able to find some way to talk her out of it by means of the smooth speech that we the fair sex have, you know."

Genzo: I'm not at all sure that she can be so easily fooled. Trifles neglected often take a serious turn. Should the exigency of the situation require, we might as well resort to a wholesale dispatch of -----

Tonami: "Eh? You mean -----"

Genzo: "Hush. No sacrifice is too great for saving our Lord. All's for the sake of our Master."

Tonami: "I'm with you, my dear, a faint heart only undermines the prospects of our task."

With the stoniest heart they bring themselves on their legs,

As they exchange pathetic looks with each other,

Overcome by sentiments in their unguarded moment:

Genzo &
Tonami:

"Our pupils are as dear to us as our own sons.

What a strange prank of fate, that Kotaro should come to us on this day of all days. Is it the effect of the boy's sins in his previous life,--- or the nemesis of his mother in her preceeding existence? The fiery wheels of Karma will soon be turning upon ourselves for retribution."

As she so repines, tears he restrains, the twin hearts
Now realizing what indeed 'tis to serve the Lord.

Meanwhile at the entrance arrives Shundo Gamba
For Kanshusai's head, accompanied by Matsuo
In his palanquin, to identify the head.

The party is followed by villagers in swarm,
Who, learning what is going to happen in the school,
Gathered around to claim their boys to safeguard them:

Villager: "Let it please our Lord. We who are assembled here have our children now studying penmanship in this school. We ~~W~~ therefore ask your leave to take them home with us before they may be beheaded by miscognizance. For mercy's sake, let us take our children home."

Quite annoyed at the villagers' noisy appeal, Gemba thunders out in a sharp, mercitess tone:

Gemba: Be still, you beasts of mountain peasants. We have no use for your brats. Do with them as you like, but do it quickly and take yourselves away."

"Wait a bit, Sir," rings that prudenat doice of Malsuo, As he detakes himself out of his dehicle, "Pon his sword leaning, and garing 'round he continues:

Kikugoro
Matsuo: "In spite of my indisposition, I am instructed to ~~YAK~~ take upon myself the important task of identifying Kanshusai's head, because no one else knows the boy by sight. ~~As~~ our Lord was kind enough to promise me my oft-requested leave of absence for recuperation, when I properly discharge my duties, I feel myself all the more responsible for bringing today's affair to a successful culmination. "Danger comes soonest when it's despised." Even

these peasants should'nt escape our scrutiny, because they are guilty of harbouring kinsfolk of our enemy Kanshojo, and who knows but that they may even try to carry out Kanshusai disguised as one of their own brats, (turning to peasants).

"Now, my peasants, stop this noise and call out your brats one by one. They shall be released through personal examinations."

This spells stalemate o'er the high-strung couple within,
Threatening daggers to the hearts prepared for the worst,
While, outside, "timeworn dads", blind--to the strain inside
Call out by turns to their fondlings from the entrance.

"Chomatsu! Say, Chomatsu" --at which call, out comes
A brat different from Kanshusai as chalk from cheese,
With his face all ink-smeared, and released at a glance.

"Iwamatsu! Isn't Iwamatsu there?" -- shouts 'nother voice.
"What d'ye want, grandpa?" --a round faced chubby elf
Darted out like a ball hit squarely with a bat
Into the arms of his grandpa, who catches safe
The apple of his eye in his loving embrace.

Next tumbles out at his daddy's call a spoilt child,
A horse-faced 15 year old slobberer who coaxes
To be taken home in his dad's arms, making faces
And uttering queer noises while he's fondled 'way.

"Mine's a handsome tot--be sure and please don't confound"
The one called out with such a proud introduction was
An oval-faced boy, fair 'nough to rouse suspicion,
But was freed, for his neck was black with moles or smears.

The rest of the village boys at or out of school,
Were all examined and all released, none bearing
The faintest trace of resemblance, and no wonder,
As they were, after all, cast in a different mould.

"Now, our turn," so realizing Genzo and his wife
prepare themselves for the worst, as before them stand
Genba and Matsuo, renewing their demand:

Genba: "Now Genzo, here we are come for Kanshusai's head,
which you promised to give us by cutting it off in our
presence. We can't wait another single minute."

Not in the least perturbed, Genzo stands up, saying:

Genzo: "Certainly, Sir, but you will be good enough to
grant me a short respits, since, after all, the child
of the quondam Court Minister couldn't be expected
to be butchered like a hog." --

When a shrewd interdention is made by Matsuo:

Matsuo: "That sort of trick won't work with me, Genzo.
Even though you may try to have the little one

escape from this abode in secret, by taking advantage of the grace granted, let it be known for your information that the road in the back is guarded by hundreds of men, and leaves not a small crevice for even an ant to crawl through.

"Any attempt of producing a fake head on the assumption that the living and the lifeless countenances differ, would be of no avail either. So for your own good, don't attempt any old tricks on me."

This invective sets the blood of Genzo boiling
And makes him burst into a fiery retortion:

Genzo: "Hang you stupid elaboration. You shall soon be presented with the wanted head, which you will most ~~xxx~~ certainly find to be genuine, unless your present morbidity leads yourself into optical ~~illusions~~ illusions."

"Go on quick with your own job," is Gemba's retort
In a tone so dictatorial and arrogant,
"While the words are still fresh and hot out of your lips."
To meet his supreme moment, Genzo now retires
Into the inner parlour, bracing up his nerves,
While his wife's left in her feminine anxiety.

Meanwhile Gemba stands on the alert scanning round

Every nook and corner of the rooms, as Matsuo,
Secretly counting the number of the boys' desks,
Puts in a question that quite upsets the matron:

Matsuo: "Here's a puzzle, my good lady. The brats carried
out a little while ago counted eight, whereas I find
that the desks in here number nine. Whose is it,
and where is he?

This sudden thrust scores on Genzo's wife Tonami,
Who in confusion, incoherently replies:

Tonami: "Oh, that's the desk of the boy who was enrolled as
a new p no, er yes, who came recently to
this village

Matsuo: "Nonsense!"

Tonami: Oh yes. What I meant to say was that the desk
belongs to Kanshusai himself."

This subterfuge so nicely coating the home truth,
Just as that lacquered desk conceals its wooden grain,
Splendidly parried the brunt of the sharp question.

"Yet it's protraction, that throws a man off his guard."
So murmuring, up stands Matsuo with Gamba,
When from the inner room, comes an ominous thud,
Confessing advent of that expected moment,
And makes Tonami's blood freeze as she reels inside.

Presently reappears Genzo, stern and composed,
With the head-box resting upon a white draped stand.

Genzo: "In obedience to your irrisistible command, Sir,
I have just decapitated Kanshusai. Now Matsuo Maru
(turning to him) compose yourself to inspect this
important thing."

Genzo, with these words, withdraws a few steps and sits
Beside Matsuo in all straining, ready to stab him
The very moment he brands the head counterfeit,
By secretly laying his hand on his sword-hilt.

Matsuo: "You don't have to tell me how to deal with this job,
Genzo. Now the head shall be scrutinized through
the "Justice Reflection Mirror" of the "Judge of
Hades", to discern the truth from the false. Paradise
or Hell, all now balances on the development of the
next supreme moment."

So saying, Matsuo shrewdly orders his men
To surround Genzo and his wife for their arrest
As he slightly leans forward to inspect the head.
Genzo is all vigilance, his wife too, alert
Finding themselves now between hammer and anvil,
With the "uncanny ludge" fore, and arresters aft.

In a moment that seemed to Genzo and his wife
As if the doom of the whole world were being sealed
Matsuo did remove the lid of the casket,
Only to find inside the head of Kotaro.

A minute slipped by, then 'nother, in dead silence,
All the while, Genzo in a couchant attitude,
And his wife absorbed in prayers for Divine aid,
All awaiting the words from Matsuo's lips, when
With this fateful speech, the Inspector breaks silence:

Matsuo: "Genuine! It is the head of Kanshusai."

Confounded by the unexpected declaration,
The couple only looked 'round as though in a trance
While Gemba, displaying his delight on his face,
Appreciated Genzo's act, by promising him
To pardon his offence for sheltering the boy.

Gemba: "And now, my Matsuomaru, that the deed is done,
let us hurry to our Lord with this head."

Matsuo: "Certainly. Let us be quick about it before we get
blamed for delaying. As for myself, I am anxious to
get my leave of absence."

Gemba: "That you might do as you please I guess, now that
you have completed your business."

With an exchange of these words, the two go apart,
Gemba hurrying back to his Lord with the head,
And Matsuo ~~try~~ turning home in his palanquin.

The couple then slammed the door behind, quite speechless
Dissolving themselves in panting sighs of relief.
With a profound obeisance to Heaven and Earth
Genzo cheers his wife, releasing his suppressed joy:

Genzo: "Thanks to the Divine. Because of the virtues of
our great Lord, Matsuo's eyes failed him, and he
went back with the impression that the head he
inspected was that of our little Lord. This is cer-
tainly a miracle that only the Heavens above could
work out. So let us congratulate our little Lord on
his good fortune of his endless age thus assured."

"Sure nothing could be more wonderful and joyous"
Rejoins his wife as she in tears of joy remarks:

Tonami: "Was it because the spirit of our Lord Kanshojo
found its way in the eyes of that ingrate Matsuo, at
that critical moment of his inspection, or because
our ever-worshipped Golden Goddess cast a spell,
that such a blunder should have been committed by
him? For otherwise the confusion could not have

taken place. Although they bore a resemblance to each other, they would look as different as gold from brass when placed side by side. We can only bless our Lord for his auspicious prospects."

Man and wife were thus indulging in ecstasies,
When back comes Kotaro's mother in breathless haste,
No doubt for her boy, and Knocks on the door, saying:

Chiyo: "This is your new pupil's mother just come back."

This call takes them by surprise for a second time,
And again throws the wife into perplexity,
As it only means another trial to face,
When one was but just overcome, with such ado.

Genzo, without being least disturbed, reminds her
Of what he did stress before, that no sacrifice
Could ever be too big for protecting their charge.
So admonishing her, and pushing her 'way
He throws open the entrance door with a clatter,
When the lady, politely, greets him by saying:

Chiyo: "I think that I have the honour of addressing the
Master. I'm very pleased to meet you, and thankful
for your kindness in taking care of my little
boy. Perhaps I had better take him home for the day.

before he tires you be staying too long. And where
is he, if I may ask?

adailing himself of that question from Chiyo,
Genzo tells her direct and in all sobriety,
That he is at play with the other boys inside,
And that she might go in herself and take him home.

Chiyo: "Then you will please excuse me."

She proceeds a few steps towards the inner rooms,
When quick as thought, Genzo attacks her from behind,
But being a well-trained lady of samurai
She turns 'side nimbly from the sharp brunt of his blade.
Next instant flashes another detrmind stroke,
So forceful, so intent upon her destruction,
Which again she wards off with her son's desk, saying:

Chiyo: "Just wait, Sir. Wait a moment! What does all this
mean?

Without heeding these words uttered by the lady,
He once more slashes down with his sword upon her.
This third stroke cleaves the desk in two, when from ~~inside~~
inside Drops a suit of "grave-clothes", with a sanctified
piece Of white cloth bearing six characters from Sutra,
Meaning, "Hail Amitabha" --A Buddhistic prayer.

This surprising event halts Genzo a minute,
Apparently his mind overwhelmed with wonder.
Taking advantage of the lull, in tears she asks:

Chiyo: "I'm anxious to know if my boy had the honour of
making himself our little Lord Kanshuzai's substitute."

Genzo: "Good Heavens! Then you were prepared for it?"

Chiyo: "Prepared, Sir, from the very beginning. That is
why we sent him here with the grave clothes and
the Sutra banner concealed in his desk."

Genzo: And whose lady are you, may I ask?"

Just before she had time to answer that query,
From outside the entrance intervenes a voice, that
Recites 'loud Kanshojo's poem expressing
His trust in the loyalty of his "Triplet Vassals,"
Who were named after the Plum, Cherry and Pine-trees
In his garden, which he used to love in his days.

The first named two were famous for their loyalty,
Just as the trees of their namesakes won the same fame,
The Plum travelling as far as the Lord's exiled place,
So goes the story, while the Cherry withered to death,
When it fell to the Lord's peer let to be banished;
The Pine or Matsuo 'lone was looked' pen as unloyal
For his service to Shihei, the Lord's slanderer and foe,

But the Lord knew Matsuo best and trusted him,
As is composed his poem, which reads as follows:

"As I know this to be our Way,
That Plum e'en leaps and Cherry wanes
If for their Lord, how can I say
Pine 'lone will put my heart to pains?"

The voice reciting this poem takes all aback,
When it breaks out into an excited address:

Matsuo: "Cheer up, my wife, cheer up. Be happy that our
child rendered proof of his loyal service."

At this, Kotaro's poor mother bursts into tears,
And, for moments, entirely yields to sentiments,
When with a chiding voice "What a coward", 'pon her,
In passes Matsuo, to the further 'mazement
Of Genzo and his wife who, confounded so much,
Know not whether they are adream or awoken,
Or even whether indeed they are man and wife.

Then in a polite manner Genzo proposes
To reserve all formal greetings for the moment,
And to ask Matsuo what on earth all this means
That the present train of his conduct should betray
His past course of action that always seemed hostile.

"This abrupt, downright change is a perfect puzzle"
Says Genzo, which was soon affirmed by Matsuo,
Who proceeds to explain away the whole affair:

Matsuo: "As you know, we triplet brothers, Umee, Sakura and myself had different Masters to serve and it was my poor lot to have to serve Lord Shihei, the arch enemy of our beloved Lord. As a consequence, I had not only to sever relationship with my parents and brothers but even had to act against the interest of our benefactor, to whom our family of triplets is traditionally indebted. "This inverted service, though due to my present Master's order, cannot but be attributed to my own Nemesis, and in my unquenchable desire to put an end to this cursed connection of mine with Shihei, I had time and again applied for leave of absence, feigning indisposition, until he made it known to me that my request would be granted if I undertook this job. Thus it came to pass that I was entrusted with today's mission of the head inspection. "I was certain, however, that you would under no circumstances sacrifice the little Lord. Yet I could not see any other way for you out of the difficulty unless you obtained a

suitable substitute for the little Sire.

"It was then that I hit upon the happy plan, which gave me an opportunity to requite the old Lord's favour. In concert with my wife, Chiyo, I had sent in my son, Ketaro here to have him sacrificed as our little Lord's substitute."

"When I examined the number of desks, I had in mind nothing but the fact of ascertaining if my boy had arrived as prearranged. Our Lord Kanshejo seeing through my personality, expressed in his poem, referring to the Triplet's loyalty, his unswerving confidence that the Pine would never fail him. "My only regret, however, is that this real sentiment of our Lord manifested in that poem is misinterpreted by the people in general as if the Lord complained of my un-loyalty. You may well imagine the bitter experience I've had to go through all these long years.

"Had it not been for that boy, Heaven only knows, I might have had to live and die a cursed ingrate. Man could never have better treasures than his child."

Man could never have better treasures than his child."

This concluding remark 'gain makes his wife release

Her sentiments in tears as she pours out her heart:

Chiyo: "Kotaro beneath the sod will surely be glad to hear his father say so. "No better treasure for man than his child" is the best tribute that can be offered him in God's acre. "With what bitter pain in my heart I scolded him as he persisted, so unlike his usual self, to accompany me, when parting some hours ago. I pretended to go on a visit to the next village but when I was half way home I realized that I couldn't go home with my dearest on the threshold of death. Really, I don't care if I'm despised as a coward but I had to return here if only to get a glimpse of his lifeless countenance.

"The entrance gratuity he was made to present When making himself a new pupil, has now turned The very ~~obit~~ obituary gift towards himself. What an ill-fated boy to have had to enter His school of death even with obsequial presents.

"If the boy had been of mean birth and base breeding, He would never have had to sacrifice himself. If true that Death claims the fair child as proverbs go, To have been born fair did redound to his hard lot/.

What an irony of fate, that he should have gone
E'en through measles like boys promising a long life."

With these sad words she all but drowns herself in tears,
When Tonami, also weeping in sympathy,
Turns to the bereaved to add tributes to the dead:

Tonami: "It seems just like a minute ago when your
beloved son met my husband. It was at that
moment when the idea of substituting him for
Kanshusai presented itself in his mind. Inne-
cently the boy greeted his Master with those
simple touching words 'this is Kotaro, your new
obedient pupil'.

"The very recollection of that scene touches me
as deeply as though he were my own son. There-
fore it is only natural that this real parents
should be so grief-stricken."

As the two ladies indulge in endless weeping,
Matsuo breaks in and addresses them saying:

Matsuo: "No more weeping please, my lady. And why must
you weep so, my wife? You were willingly
prepared for all this, weren't you, after weep-
ing yourself dry before we came here? Come

now. Please compose yourself in deference to host and hostess.

"Well, sir, (turning to Genzo) I wish to settle a more important point. Although I have strict instructions to my son before sending him to you here, being but a mere babe, I'm sorely afraid that he behaved in a cowardly manner at his last moment. Tell me, Genzo, did he?"

Genzo: "Not in the least, Matsuo. On the contrary he was brave to the end. When I informed him that he was wanted as a substitute for our little Lord Kanshusai, he just sat there calm and composed like a brave little warrior, ---

Matsuo: "Without even trying to run away?"

Genzo: "✓ No. He sat there with a quiet smile on his face -----"

Matsuo: "He did? Um ----- Well done, Ketaro ----- Stout fellow ----- A noble sacrifice to have thus requited our Lord's favour on behalf of his ^{parents.} ~~glorious/deed/recalls/the~~ "His filial piety and his glorious deed recalls the memories of my dead brother, Sakuramaru who unfortunately was taken from our midst before he could be of any service to our Lord. I can well picture him, in his grave, envying my son.

Matsuo thus permits himself now to sink deep
Into reminiscences of his brother, when ---

Chiyo: "And that uncle who is no more, Kotaro is now
privileged to meet."

With these words a paroxysm of grief overtakes
The poor mother, and all those present around her.
Moved by the lamentations overheard, comes out
the little Lord Kanshusai, who consoles them thus:

Kanshusai: "Really, I'm deeply grieved. Had I been aware
that the boy was to die in my stead I would cer-
tainly have spared you all this cruel sorrow.
What a poor boy."

The little Lord sobs hard with his sleeves to his face,
Matsuo and his wife shed $\frac{1}{2}$ tears of gratitude,
Touched deep/ $\frac{1}{2}$ by the little Lord's gracious condolence.

Matsuo begs them to 'veil himself of this chance
To present an offering to the little Lord,
And orders his men to bring up a palanquin
Which was prepared by him for the present purpose.
As soon as the vehicle is set before all,
Matsuo opens it politely, when out comes
Lady Kanshojo, mother of the little Lord.

The two have thus the most unexpected pleasure,
All due to Matsuo, of meeting each other,
Since they were torn apart when their Lord was exiled.

Genzo: "What efforts we have so long made to locate your
Ladyship's whereabouts. Where in the world have
you been and how did you manage to get here."

In response Matsuo who knows all, now explains:

Matsuo: "While her Ladyship was sheltering on the outskirts
of Kyoto, one of Shihel's retainers happened
to get wind of it and was reported to have sent
his men to arrest her. Thereupon I disguised
myself as an itinerant priest and managed to
extricate her Ladyship from the danger threaten-
ing her.

"And now I hope you will escort her Ladyship
together with the little Lord down to Kawachi
province, where her daughter is already shelter-
ing in all safety.

"Now, my wife, you will please move Kotaro's
remains into this vehicle, and let's set to
the obsequies.

Meanwhile Tonami who knew what's to be done next,

Brings out the remains in her arms in reverence,
And places them in the awaiting palanquin.
When the boy's outer coat is removed, he's revealed
In a snow-white hempen cloth of the grave costume
Indicating his preparedness to meet his death.

Seeing through his parents' trying experience
Of escorting the remains for their burial,
Genzo and his wife offer to go in their stead
Reminding them, as an expedience, for the purpose
Of the religious custom, exempting parents
From the bitter duty of making such escort.
But Matsuo declines it with thanks, remarking
That he's not escorting the remains of his son
But of the little Lord's own, and that he wants all
To prepare for making the funeral "Gate-Fire".

"Now for the sacred "Gate-Fire" goes 'round a chorus
Of the mingled voices of request and response,
To mark the last and the end of this whole affair,
To the lingering play, 'mong all, of deep emotions,
In which are now pleased to join bitterly sobbing
The Noble Lady and the little Lord alike.

The poor boy now passes from writing-pupilage
To Buddha's discipleship in the world beyond.